

Dr. William F. Clapp Duxbury Scientist, Passes

Duxbury was saddened to hear of the passing of Dr. William F. Clapp, 71, at noon on Friday, Dec. 28, at the Massachusetts Memorial Hospital. Born in Cambridge, "Bill," as he was affectionately known to his friends, was not only leader in the field of Teredo and other marine borer research, but he made Duxbury the focal center of this kind of research. "World-wide attention attracted by Dr. Clapp's campaign against the Teredo has turned Duxbury into an international Mecca," said a writer in a science journal. "A biologist from Australia may rub elbows with a French engineer or a Panamanian chemist. Often, large groups of scientists from every quarter of the globe meet with him to discuss some phase of the war against marine borers." Internationally known as the top consultant on the many marine borers responsible for the tremendous destruction of railroad bridges, docks and other waterfront installations, he was a pioneer in the field of biological engineering. He saved the U. S. Government and private industry multimillions of dollars when he discovered means of preventing damage by marine parasites. The Saturday Evening Post was preparing an article on Dr. Clapp when he died, following a long illness which was aggravated since his recent return from Italy.

A Harvard-trained scientist who to the study of marine biology for years was associated with A "shirt-sleeved" scientist who Harvard, where for 20 years he never sent his clients a bill, was Curator of Mollusks, and at according to a Reader's Digest article M. I. T., he devoted his adult life

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ticle, he built his first laboratory in an old schooner moored at T-Wharf in Boston. Then, for years, he operated the William F. Clapp laboratories here, serving, meanwhile, on the faculties of Harvard and M.I.T. and as an overseer of Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology. He was a consultant of the Armed Forces in both world wars, and in latter years his investigations of marine borers extended from Alaska and Newfoundland to the tropics, from Japan to remote Pacific islands and Australia. Recognizing his brilliance in his field, Norwich University made him a Doctor of Science.

Bill Clapp was more than an eminent scientist, however. He was a grand person who never forgot his old friends. He was so self-effacing he never bothered to fill the forms that would have put his name in WHO'S WHO IN SCIENCE and in other such volumes. He had a wonderful sense of humor and sense of proportion. He was modest, friendly, entertaining. We will all miss Bill Clapp.

Private services were held Monday from his late home on Washington St., and interment was in Mayflower Cemetery. He leaves his widow, Mrs. Nellie A. (Mowry) Clapp.